

From: EPAResearchCompass [EPAResearchCompass@epa.gov]
Sent: 1/12/2021 8:22:36 PM
To: ORD-ALL Feds and NonFeds and RSLs [ORD-ALL_Feds_and_NonFeds_and_RSLs@epa.gov]
CC: Klinger, Adam [Klinger.Adam@epa.gov]; Liljegren, Jennifer [Liljegren.Jennifer@epa.gov]; Pollard, Solomon [Pollard.Solomon@epa.gov]; Clarage, Meredith [Clarage.Meredith@epa.gov]; Fan, Shirley [Fan.Shirley@epa.gov]; Crk, Tanja [Crk.Tanja@epa.gov]; Scalise, Laura [Scalise.Laura@epa.gov]; MaGowan, Maricruz [MaGowan.Maricruz@epa.gov]; Braverman, Carole [braverman.carole@epa.gov]; Choi, Christopher [choi.christopher@epa.gov]; Schupp, George [schupp.george@epa.gov]; Persoon, Carolyn [persoon.carolyn@epa.gov]; Sauerhage, Maggie [Sauerhage.Maggie@epa.gov]; Batka, Sheila [Batka.Sheila@epa.gov]; Spence, Sandra [Spence.Sandra@epa.gov]; Peffers, Mel [Peffers.Mel@epa.gov]
Subject: Weekly Compass: January 12, 2021



Weekly Update: 1/12/2021

Welcome to the Weekly Compass, your gateway to information about recent and upcoming ORD activities. If you have ideas for the Weekly Compass, please send them to the editors. To see past issues, visit the Weekly Compass archive on ORD@work.

Weekly Note from Jennifer

ORDers-

Our first ORD All Hands of 2021 is Thursday, January 21 at 2pm eastern. Among other things, we plan to discuss the Omnibus budget, transition, COVID, and telework. Please send questions you would like us to address to Liz Blackburn (blackburn.elizabeth@epa.gov) no later than Thursday, January 14th. As always, we will do our best to get to as many questions as possible.

As the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) comes to a close, help us finish strong and extend our impact. As of January 3rd, ORD has raised \$78,431 and pledged 65 volunteer hours! To donate or to pledge volunteer hours to support CFC charities, please visit the

CFC donation portal. For more information, visit the EPA CFC intranet site. The final day to pledge is Friday, January 15th.

Per the note from the Associate Deputy Administrator, all EPA facilities will remain in their current phase until the next review on Thursday, February 18, 2021. For more information, the EPA Facility Status Dashboard will continue to be updated every Thursday, and we encourage all employees to stay informed about the status of your local commuting area and keep checking for updates on the COVID-19 intranet site.

Following last week's violence in our nation's capital, several people have raised concerns about the security of our facilities. We are discussing various ways to enhance security at all EPA locations. For now, we recommend that you monitor local conditions, continue to telework, and minimize coming into the facility as much as possible. This will address both public health and security measures.

Thank you as always for your dedicated service to the American public and to protecting health and the environment. Continue to stay safe and be well.

--Jennifer

Quick Updates

- Share Your Research on our Social Media! If you are interested in talking about your science on our @EPAresearch Twitter and Facebook, please reach out to Melissa Anley-Mills (Anley-Mills.Melissa@epa.gov) and Bailey Stearns (Stearns.Bailey@epa.gov). They will work with you and your Communications Director to craft social media about your impactful research!
- Know a K-12 student who is setting an environmental stewardship example for their community? Encourage them to apply for our President's Environmental Youth Award (PEYA) by February 19. Questions? Email: peya@epa.gov
- Know a K-12 teacher using environmental education to set an example for their students and inspire their learning? Encourage them to apply for our Presidential Innovation Award for Environmental Educators (PIAEE) by February 19. Questions? Email: piaee@epa.gov
- Nominate your colleagues for the Partnership for Public Service's 2020 Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medals, or the "Sammies" through January 15
- To donate or to pledge volunteer hours to support CFC charities, please visit the CFC donation portal. For more information, visit the EPA CFC intranet site.
- EPA is partnering with the Treasury Executive Institute (TEI) to offer coaching and learning activities for agency leaders.
- The ORD@Work ELMS homepage is a great place to visit for a wide range of ELMS related information. Visit the "ELMS Efforts" page for reflections on our FY20 ELMS successes, submit ideas implemented on the "Idea Implementation Input" page.
- The 50+ anniversary store is now live!

- Upcoming webinars:
 - 1/14, 12PM ET: SERDP & ESTCP Webinar: Improving Energy Efficiency through Advanced Building Controls
 - 1/20, 2PM ET: Depackaging & Commercial Composting – An Integrated System for Organics Recycling
 - 1/21, 2PM ET: Homeland Security Research Webinar Series--COVID-19: UV-C Devices and Methods for Surface Disinfection

Faces of ORD: CEMM'S Morgan Schwartz

In the Lab:

Homeland Security Research Webinar Series Focusing on UV Disinfection and Devices

On January 21, EPA researchers Lukas Oudejans and Katherine Ratliff will present findings from ongoing work with both LA Metro and NYC MTA to evaluate the efficacy of UV-C devices and methods for surface disinfection on the HSRP webinar series.

Registration is open and more information can be found here:

<https://www.epa.gov/emergency-response-research/homeland-security-research-webinar-series>

EPA SBIR Phase II Business Awarded Commercialization Option

AAPlasma, LLC, a small business out of Pennsylvania, was awarded the EPA SBIR commercialization option of nearly \$100,000. The commercialization option matches third-party investment from a company interested in helping AAPlasma build their lab capacity and accelerate their technology to market. With this additional funding, AAPlasma will further commercialization efforts of their EPA SBIR Phase II project focused on developing a novel process that uses non-thermal plasma treatment to remove PFOS and PFOA from water.

CCTE Releases New Version of Chemicals and Products Database (CPDat)

CPDat contains curated information from public documents on how chemicals are used, including consumer product composition data as well as functional and general use data. CPDat is used to help estimate exposure potential for thousands of chemicals. Since 2018, the CPDat team has worked to implement a new data curation and management system, called Factotum, which enabled an increase in the volume and reliability of the curated data. The new version is the first version of CPDat curated within Factotum and is available here. CPDat data curated within Factotum will also be regularly released via the CompTox Chemicals Dashboard.

CCTE and OSAPE Announce a New Program Support Coordinator - Nisha Sipes

On November 9, Nisha Sipes joined the CCTE Research Planning and Implementation staff as an Assistant Center Director (ACD) and Program Support Coordinator (PSC). The Program Support Coordinators (Santini Ramasamy (CPHEA), Lee Riddick (CEMM), Evelyn Hartzell (CESER), and now Nisha Sipes (CCTE) are the core connection between the

Centers and support for Regulatory Actions and Regulatory Assessments coordinated by OSAPE. The role is instrumental to translating ORD science into Agency policy through the Action Development Process and coordinating ad hoc technical support for Program Office and Regions. In her ACD role, Nisha also facilitates the translation of CCTE's research for use in decisions and provides scientific and technical expertise to stakeholders with an interest in using CCTE research to inform public health and environmental decisions. Nisha re-joins EPA after several years at the National Toxicology Program as a Health Science Evaluator focusing on developmental neurotoxicity and new approach methods, specifically in vitro to in vivo extrapolation. Thank you to Rebecca Daniels (CCTE) for her interim PSC role this past year.

CCTE, NOAA and Others Collaborate to Restore Habitat

In the St. Louis River Estuary Habitat Focus Area, CCTE, NOAA and partners are working to clean up contaminated sediments and restore habitat from historical industrial activities. To inform restoration decisions and track the progress of the effort, the team developed a data module and compiled hundreds of data sets into NOAA's Great Lakes Data Integration Visualization Exploration and Reporting (DIVER) application. The public can now access data from more than 140 studies, including more than 700,000 samples and 80,000 toxicity tests results. This data can inform restoration activities in the lower St. Louis River. The efforts to transition data to DIVER, and to restore the lower St. Louis River, are being conducted by NOAA's Office of Response and Restoration, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the EPA's Great Lakes National Program Office and CCTE within the EPA's Office of Research and Development. Learn more about habitat restoration with DIVER here.

In the Office:

2020 Combined Federal Campaign

There are four days left (including today!) to *Show Some Love* through the 2020 Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). From assisting refugees to protecting wildlife, a pledge through the CFC is bolstering support all around the world. ORD's total CFC contributions thus far is over \$78,431. Let's keep the momentum going through the deadline of January 15, by choosing a cause that's meaningful to you and making a pledge. To donate or to pledge volunteer hours to support CFC charities, please visit the CFC donation portal. For more information, visit the EPA CFC intranet site.

Limited Access to Web of Science and Temporary Journal Subscriptions Lapse

Access to the Web of Science, an online scientific literature and citation database that offers unique content and capabilities, is temporarily unavailable to all sites except RTP. Full access is expected in the coming weeks. In addition, due to contract delays, access may be impacted temporarily for journal subscriptions purchased by the RTP Library. The library purchases many Agency-wide titles that are made available on the Desktop Library. Some are only available to those located in RTP and Cincinnati. If you are unable to access a needed journal article, please submit a request for an interlibrary loan. If you have any questions, please contact Laura Doyle.

American Board of Toxicology DABT Exam

At this time the American Board of Toxicology plans to hold the 2021 DABT Certification Examination on Wednesday, October 13th, 2021. Since 2017, certification has been largely based on the practical application of toxicology (i.e., regulatory toxicology and risk assessment). Additional details regarding the ABT and the Certification Exam are available at www.abtox.org.

If you are interested in sitting for the exam or simply seeking training in the basic principles of toxicology, the ABT 2021 Study Group will start meeting January 25th via Zoom for subject matter review (based on Casarett and Doull's Toxicology: The Basic Science of Poisons, 9th ed.). The total expected time to devote to the study group is 4-8 hours per week, depending on your level of expertise and personal learning objectives. Each participant is expected to cover at least one of the topics, using and/or modifying currently available materials. On Mondays, the group will meet for a 1 hour lecture. On Fridays, the group will meet to review the week's material, practice questions, practice exams, etc. Both meeting times will be accessible via Zoom from 1-2PM.

To join the study group, please:

1. Seek approval from your supervisor
 2. Send your personal, non-government email address to abtstudygroup@gmail.com
- Please feel free to share this information with your colleagues.

OSIM to Conduct Meetings with ORD Researchers

OSIM will be conducting collaborative meetings with ORD researchers in the next few months to improve the research environment by creating innovative information technology (IT) projects.

The goal of the meetings is to identify inefficiencies in workflow, tools or missing capabilities, and to continue to build relationships. The type of questions that may be asked during the meetings include:

1. What does your research workflow look like?
2. What are some IT challenges that you face in your work?
3. What are some IT changes that can make your work more efficient?
4. Are there any tools, services, or capabilities that you feel would benefit your work?

This initiative was started to ensure researchers have the resources needed to keep up with the always changing research environment and to adhere to the Evidence Act, a mandate which requires a greater emphasis on our data management capabilities at the EPA.

By building a better research environment, researchers can continue to do the best work of their careers and do so efficiently. This means more work can be done to protect human health and the environment. If anyone is interested in taking part in OSIM's upcoming discussions about researchers' workflow, please [click here](#).

COVID-19 Response Resources

As a resource for staff, the following information is repeated from previous weeks.

- The agency Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Guidance and Information site is available as a resource for employees on a variety of topics.

- The main page compiles agency communications about COVID-19, as well as guidance from the Office of Management and Budget and the Office of Personnel Management.
- The [EPA FAQs](#) are updated regularly and provide information on a range of topics, including telework, SEE enrollee and ORISE participant telework, retirement and separation from the agency during the COVID-19 response, and the onboarding process.
- An app and website have been developed to help users understand what to do next about COVID-19. The tool provides CDC recommendations on next steps including guidance on social distancing and self-isolating, how to closely monitor symptoms, recommendations on testing, and when to contact a medical provider. Employees can visit the Apple App Store and download the Apple COVID-19 App to their personal Apple devices or visit the [website](#).

As part of their online COVID-19 resources, CDC provides a [website](#) with helpful information for identifying and managing stress during this time as well as seeking help from a crisis helpline.

Accolades:

CCTE Scientist Receives SOT Award

CCTE's Dr. Barbara Wetmore was awarded the Society of Toxicology's 2021 Enhancement of Animal Welfare Award. Dr. Wetmore leads CCTE's experimental efforts in high throughput *in vitro* toxicokinetic testing, which provides data on how readily chemicals are absorbed, distributed, and eliminated from the body. More information available [here](#).

In the news:

Chemical & Engineering News *World Chemical Outlook 2021*

The *World Chemical Outlook 2021* [summarized roughly 13 global-scale issues](#) C&EN anticipates to have major impacts in 2021. PFAS is the third-listed global issue. The PFAS issue is headlined with the structure for the chloroperfluoropolyether carboxylate (CIPFPECA) molecule that ORD researchers discovered.

CCTE Research Featured in Chemical and Engineering News

Chemical and Engineering News featured an article about CCTE research to develop and use new approach methods, including cell-based assays and zebrafish, to rapidly identify potential neurotoxicants. The article focuses on efforts in the U.S. and Europe to use new approach methods in the identification and regulation of chemicals with potential neurodevelopmental effects. Full article available [here](#).

Strengthening Transparency in Regulatory Science Final Rule

The final rule was published in the Federal Register on January 6. The implementation workgroup met on January 5 to discuss next steps. Read the press release: [EPA Finalizes Rule Strengthening Transparency in Pivotal Science Underlying Significant Regulatory Actions and Influential Scientific Information](#).

Faces of ORD: CEMM's Morgan Schwartz



Name: Morgan Schwartz

Job/Position: Physical Scientist

L/C/O or Program: CEMM/ACESD

1. When did you start at EPA?

I started at EPA late September 2019 in CEMM's ACESD as a Pathways hire.

2. What do you normally do in your job day-to-day?

On a day to day basis I work with the nutrients team at ACESD to analyze water samples using auto-analyzers. Other days I go out into the field collecting water samples and data for our local monthly sampling projects in Narragansett Bay and Wickford Harbor in Rhode Island.

3. What have been some of your best remote working practices?

My best practices for remote working are to make sure I get up and stretch for a few minutes every hour or so, and to wear my blue light blocking glasses.

4. What new hobby/or old hobby have you picked up during this stretch of remote working?

Recently I have been baking with new recipes and more challenging techniques.

5. If you could visit anywhere in the world you've never been, where would you go?

I would love to visit Iceland to see their unique landscapes and maybe get a chance to see the Northern Lights.

6. If you could have one superpower, what would it be?

Shapeshifting.

7. What is your favorite film?

Hidden Figures.

8. Describe any steps you take in your daily life to protect the environment.

I try to avoid "single use" plastic products and always have a reusable water bottle with me.